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Chiefs, Field Bureaus

23 August 1948

Acting Chief, FBIB

Letter of Instruction

1. The Chief, FBIB, has directed that a monthly letter be sent to all field bureaus, from the Washington office, with the purpose of affording Bureau Chiefs and members of their staff guidance and assistance where the need is indicated. Information of a general nature will also be included in this letter, with a view to keeping each of you informed as to the overall progress of the Branch.

2. General Information

a. During the month of July three special reports were prepared by the Special Reports Division dealing with radio broadcasts concerning the Palestine Issue, the Status of Telecommunications System in North Africa, and the Ten Most Frequent Soviet Propaganda Themes.

b. Two thousand, seven hundred forty-four items were selected from foreign broadcast material for distribution to U. S. Government Agencies. These items did not appear in any of the regular FBIB publications.

c. Total distribution of the Daily Report now runs 1379 copies.

d. The London Bureau, at the request of the Department of State, has prepared special daily reports for U.S. delegates to the UN Social and Economic Conference that met 19 July in Geneva and the Conference of Freedom of Navigation of the Danube that started 28 July in Belgrade. These special reports include a roundup of news contained in foreign broadcasts concerning the conferences.

e. During the past month the Editorial Division has established a pool for typists, teletypists and editors with the object of training this group for the positions they will occupy once security clearance has been obtained.

3. Technical Information

a. Experience has proved the feasibility of using the undulating Siphon-ink recording equipment of the type manufactured by Brush, and McElroy tape recorders. Dictaphone equipment can seldom be used in recording code speeds much

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over 100 wpm. The tone of the signals received at high speeds when transcribed at low speeds is often lost due to the fact that the pitch of the signal cannot be kept high enough on recordings. If the pitch is made too high, signal levels can be greatly reduced. The Siemen-ink recording equipment can record at speeds running into several hundred wpm. The new Kelroy equipment records code signals up to 1800 wpm. An additional advantage of this type equipment is that the content of any high speed transmission can be scanned visually from the tape as the broadcast is being sent. It is suggested that all Bureau engineers survey their needs in this field and that all Bureaus engaged in code monitoring requisition equipment, if not on hand, to handle code transmissions at high speeds.

b. Some difficulty has been experienced with the new Dictaphone Belt Recording and Transcribing equipment. This is largely due to the fact that some of the electrical and mechanical features are not thoroughly tested and worked out. The dictaphone field maintenance men do not yet have a good knowledge of the equipment, with the further result that many of the problems with the equipment are not being solved as soon as they would otherwise be.

c. Experience in Washington and at Augusta will be cited here for the information of all who may be getting this equipment later. It is hoped that a study of these notes will guide the Bureau engineers and technicians in locating some of their troubles with this equipment.

Recorders

(1) Faulty recorder stylus. This will show up in that a poor groove will be cut; (a) groove too narrow or too wide from poorly formed stylus point, (b) double or distorted groove from chipped stylus point. Echoes on playback of a belt are usually due to double groove or island between grooves being too thin due to over-cutting or too wide a recorded groove caused by a recording stylus that is too wide. Replace recorder assembly.

(2) Improper recording stylus. There is a difference in the shape of the recording stylus on the 15 and 30 minute machines. The 15 minute machine should have a conical stylus point and the 30 minute machine should have spade stylus point. Errors have been made in that some of the machines have been furnished with the wrong type of stylus. Check and install correct recorder heads.

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(3) Poor tracking of recorder stylus. This will cause; (a) narrow islands between grooves due to lateral slanting of stylus, (b) wobbly groove due to too much lateral play in stylus. Adjust or replace defective recorder heads.

(4) Light stylus pressure. This will result in recorded grooves being too shallow and in turn it will cause the reproducer stylus to track poorly, causing skipping of grooves, etc. The correct recording stylus pressure, according to Dictaphone, is between 3 to 5 ounces. So far experience at Reeds and at Washington has shown that at least 4 ounces of pressure is necessary.

(5) Defective ejector operating lever. The pressed joint on the end of the shaft isn't strong enough to take the torsional stress on some equipment. Replace, as fault lies in that metals are too soft.

(6) Motor drive and flywheel belts break. Replace.

(7) Defective recording head cable. Insulation on inner conductor may be soft and tacky. In hot weather or when operating in high ambient temperatures, the inner conductor shorts to shield on the cable. Replace with better cable.

(8) Defective amplifier input cable. Same cause and results as in item "7" above. Replace cable.

(9) Defective plastic recording belts. Seams are not properly made. Some have heavy crease which causes both recording and reproduce styli to jump. In reproduction, this leads to skipping of grooves. Do not use such belts. Return to local Dictaphone office for replacements or send back to Washington for turn-in. Attempts are now being made to get seamless belts.

Reproducers

(1) Defective reproduce stylus. If the stylus is chipped, it will ruin recordings, straddle grooves or distort recordings. If it is due to improperly aligned stylus, it will jump grooves and distort recordings.

(2) [illegible] reproduce stylus. Some reproducer styli of improper dimensions went into the field. The

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stylus radius at the point should be 1.6 millimeters. If the stylus is around 1.1 millimeters, replace reproducer head.

(3) Poorly assembled reproducer assembly. If the reproducer is too loose, it will become and jump grooves easily. Adjust, or replace if adjustment is not possible.

(4) Faulty speed control assembly. The following faults may be noted:

(a) Spiral surfaced cam which operates push-rod which in turn operates variable resister contact arm may be rough or pitted. This will bind push-rod and translate force to bend the push-rod instead of pushing it.

(b) Push-rod may be made of brittle or soft metal. This will cause the push-rod to break or bend too easily.

(c) Screw that attaches end of push-rod to sliding arm on resister may be too tight. This will not allow end of push-rod to stay horizontal by sliding up and down on the screw, which describes an arc of a circle in moving from one end of the resister to the other end.

(d) Spring which returns sliding arm to front of machine may not have proper tension. If tension is too light, arm will not return and if tension is too great, speed control will creep forward.

(e) Tension of sliding arm on resister may be too light. Contact will be poor.

(f) Sliding arm contact may be rough. This will wear the surface of the resister and in time open it up. Proper adjustments or replacements should be made. Efforts are being made to have Dictaphone Corporation redesign this control. When this is done, controls on all machines will be replaced.

(5) Selenium rectifiers become shorted. Replace

(6) When the selenium rectifiers short, other power supply components may also become defective. Replace.

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(7) Some belts come apart. Replace.

Plans are in procurement stage for replacement and spare parts kits which will be sent to the overseas stations where Dictaphone offices are not available for maintenance and replacement of parts within the warranty agreement that goes with the purchase of this equipment. According to this agreement, Dictaphone Corporation replaces all parts found defective due to poor materials or workmanship. At the mainland stations, the labor of installation of such parts is also furnished by Dictaphone. Routine maintenance is not included in this agreement. At mainland stations a stock of necessary spare parts should be requisitioned to cushion against non-availability of such parts at local offices in time for Dictaphone to make replacements. Such parts should later be replaced by the Dictaphone offices. It is requested that all Bureaus report their difficulties with the belt recorders and transcribers so that (a) other Bureaus can be notified of these difficulties and steps taken to remedy them, (b) Dictaphone Corporation can be contacted by this office with an aim to replacement of or redesign and subsequent replacement of parts or assemblies which commonly give trouble.

d. FBIS is at present initiating steps to standardize radio equipment insofar as is practicable. This program will have obvious advantages in that stocks of spare and replacement parts may be reduced and lower unit costs of buying may be effected.

At present there is no radio receiver on the market which is ideally suited in all respects to our monitoring needs. It is requested that all field Bureaus survey their equipment and supply this office with data on specifications which they feel a radio receiver should embody in order to improve the monitoring operation. This survey should be completed and information received by this office within a period of sixty days.

e. In an effort to improve the operational procedures throughout the FBIS Bureaus, it is felt that more careful attention to the following points on the part of supervisors and monitors will produce good results:

(1) Watch supervisors should exercise more supervision over personnel on duty during their watch. This applies particularly to coordination of efforts of monitoring technicians working on Morse coverage. In this connection, with greater use of [illegible] equipment programs may be taken and [illegible]

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(2) A more complete use of alternate frequencies by watch supervisors and monitoring technicians, voice, will materially increase the character of reception for the monitor covering the program.

(3) More careful attention should be given to servicing the programs for the monitor, thereby eliminating fading and other unfavorable characteristics of reception.

4. Administrative Information

a. Security regulations prepared by Bureau Chiefs have been received in the Washington office and these instructions are now under study. All Bureau Chiefs will be furnished with appropriate comments, suggestions or the approval of this office at an early date.

b. One of the field bureau personnel has suggested that leave balances for all employees be forwarded to the field every 60 days instead of yearly as is presently the custom. This request is under consideration by the Fiscal Division and Bureau Chiefs will be notified as to any change in this procedure.

c. A general improvement in the administrative procedures of all field bureaus has been noted, with particular results accruing in such matters as a decrease in air shipments and parcel post from Washington to the field, which undoubtedly is due to more careful prior planning on the part of Bureau Chiefs.

d. Bureau Chiefs will insure that the provisions of the CIA Correspondence Manual are complied with in all respects. Certain deficiencies in the preparation of correspondence have been noted: (1) Correspondence which requires action within CIA has been received without a letter of transmittal; (2) Memoranda emanating from the field have dealt with more than one subject.

5. Your constructive criticisms and suggestions reference this monthly instructional letter are desired.

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